



DECEMBER 2024

President's Report

NEW AWARDS BANQUET RECOGNIZES EMPLOYEE SERVICE AND ACHIEVEMENT

A new approach to recognizing employees began this year at an evening event held at the St. Peter's Golf Club Water's Edge Banquet Center on November 21. Awards included the President's Pinnacle of Excellence, the Innovator of the Year, and the Emerson Excellence in Teaching. Service to the college also was awarded, with Behrooz Vakil recognized for 35 years.

Monica Hall-Woods, Ph.D., Professor of Biology (center), received the **President's Pinnacle of Excellence Award**. This award is reserved for faculty and staff who consistently demonstrate performance excellence throughout their careers at St. Charles Community College. President Kavalier recognized Hall-Woods for her extraordinary efforts to keep students engaged in their

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courses, exhibited by her efforts during the pandemic, when she dressed as unicorn, Darth Vader, Guy Fieri, and others. Most recently she spent her semester on sabbatical developing a 15-week lab curriculum that studies the relationship between dog sociability and genetics and invited students and employees to bring their dogs to campus.

Jennie Fuentes, Director of External Programs and Operations, received the college **Innovator of the Year Award**. This award recognizes an employee who has demonstrated exceptional creativity and problem solving and who has

contributed to increased revenue and resources. Jennie was recognized for her skillful organization and integration of various components of the Health Occupations program into cohesive student and community initiatives. Through her proactive and creative approach, she developed new programs that address challenges and significantly enhance the efficiency and impact of our programs. Her ability to bring diverse elements together has led to streamlined operations and improved outcomes.

Dayu Wang, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, received the **Excellence in Teaching Award**, sponsored by **Emerson**. This is a regional award that honors outstanding faculty in secondary and higher education. Dayu's teaching philosophy is rooted in the belief that education should be practical, inclusive, and transformative. He seeks to equip students with the skills they need to succeed in the rapidly evolving world of computer science while fostering an environment that supports diverse learning styles and backgrounds.

Five employees received the **President's Council Award**: **Cathy Daugherty, Evelyn Ratkowski, Amy Scheers, Nicole Shuman, and Laura Grant**. Selected by members of the President's Council, this award recognizes employees for going beyond what is normally expected of their positions and who provide excellent service to students.

Eight employees were recognized with the **Champion of Student Success Awards**: **Jim Martin, Beth Michael-Smith, Jeff Miller, Jeri Pilarski Schultz, Abby Schmutz, Heather Stueben, Katie Morris, and Lisa Stoner**. This prestigious award recognizes faculty who have shown exceptional dedication and commitment to supporting student success and who have been identified by SCC's Research Department as having among the highest course success rates.



The **MCCA Award** recipients also were recognized. These awards recognize faculty and staff excellence at both the state and college level. The awards also recognize trustees who demonstrate exceptional leadership, commitment, and advocacy on behalf of their institution.

The evening also included **Service Recognition Awards** for employees who are celebrating 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 years of service to the college.

Terri Edrich, Executive Director of Employee Engagement, Development, and Compliance, coordinated the event. "We have faculty and staff who regularly go above and beyond to ensure the success of our students," Terri said. "This new format showcases their contributions, and champions our dedicated employees."

More photos on back cover.



INAUGURAL EVENT FOR SCC'S ENTREPRENEURIAL INSTITUTE BROUGHT STUDENTS, COMMUNITY TOGETHER

A community of starters, including students and leaders from SCC and the community, came together for the "Aspiring Entrepreneurs Symposium," the inaugural event for SCC's Entrepreneurial Institute, held November 1.

Randy Schilling, CEO and Founder of Munibit/Owner and Founder of OPO Startups, was the keynote speaker. He presented on lessons he's learned from his own 32 years of leadership. He previously founded BoardPaq and Quilogy, achieving significant growth and recognition.

The event included a panel discussion with Jeanette Kirkpatrick, Owner of JB Creatives, LLC, Leo Anglo, General Manager and Owner of Vincent's Jewelers, and Cherie Summa, P.E., Professional Engineer and CEO of St. Louis Radon.

Also speaking at the event was Karson Quinn, SCC Student and Owner of Clean Can Pros, Melissa Jones, Assistant Vice President of HUB International, Barbara Kavalier, Ph.D., SCC President.

Jeri Pilarski Schultz, Associate Professor of Business Administration, organized the event, along with John Wiemann, SCC Vice President of Operations/Strategic Initiatives, and Kim Young, Administrative Assistant. Steve Oberg, SCC Department Chair and Associate Professor of Business Administration, organized SCC's business student participation and introduced a speaker.

The mission of SCC's Entrepreneurial Institute is to serve as a resource for students, faculty, staff, and the community, with an interest in entrepreneurship, working with startups, leveraging leading-edge technology, along with business partners in the SCC region and service area.



SCC RECOGNIZED AT 60TH ANNUAL MCCA CONFERENCE

SCC awardees were recognized at the Missouri Community College Association's 60th Annual Convention and Trade show in November.

SCC's Technology Building Redesign, led by Rex McKanry, Ed.D., Dean, and Kim Mercurio, Ed.D., Assistant Dean, received the **MCCA Innovation Award**. Newly renovated classrooms and education spaces were intentionally designed for students in the School of Business, Technology, and Workforce Readiness.



New holograms, a podcast booth, and soft seating have been added to the hallways. Tech 101 is now ready for esports, animation, augmented reality and virtual reality. Tech 108 has been named the Mark Twain Imaginarium, and is a classroom and collaboration room. Tech 110/112 is an Engineering lab, designed with space for large projects, and equipped with professional grade power tools. Tech 202 has large monitors and tiered seating for GIS, Cyber Security, and Data Analytics classes. Tech 216 is now a video production studio, including three-camera video production, stage, green screen stage, sound booth and control room.

Jean Ehlmann, Secretary, Board of Trustees, received the **Trustee Leadership Award**. She has been a dedicated member of SCC's Board of Trustees for nearly 30 years. Her first term began in 1996, and she has made it a priority to meet the needs of students and the community.

Additional nominees from SCC included:



Dr. Garrett Foster, nominated for the **Excellence in Teaching Award**



Andrea Compton, nominated for the **Administrative Professional Leadership Award**



Nick Wallace, nominated for the **Classified Staff Achievement Award**

SCC representatives hosted breakout sessions for conference-goers. Mercurio and Vicky Herbel, Ed.D., led a session, "Enhancing the First-Year Experience Program for Community College Students: Creating a Cohort Model to Encourage Success, Engagement and Sense of Belonging," using the findings from their recent doctoral dissertation.

Andrea Compton, AVP for Learning Enterprise and Engagement, Jerol Enoch, Instructional Designer, and Monica Swindle, Director of OEL and Instructional Design, presented, "Fueling Innovative Technology With an Innovation Academy."



TAQIEDDIN RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

Ranya Taqieddin, Ph.D., MScPH, BDS, Assistant Professor of Biology, was awarded the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) Professor Chan Two-Year College Award for the Engaged Teaching of Biology. She was honored at the NABT conference in Anaheim, CA, in November. She has shown outstanding dedication to creating equitable and inclusive learning environments for students.

VETERANS HONORED AT CEREMONY, SPECIAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER

On Veterans Day a special keynote speaker, Retired Colonel Laurel "Buff" Burkel, shared her inspirational story of survival and recovery, and a motivational message about the power of supporting each other. She is a senior navigator with over 27 years of U.S. Air Force service – totaling more than 2,100 flight hours (285 combat and combat support hours) – including tours in Korea, Canada, and Afghanistan.

A special thank you goes to the St. Charles VFW Post 2866, the SCC Chamber Choir, and Rev. Bob Blake for participating in the ceremony.



NATIONAL COMPETITION FOR WOMEN'S SOCCER AND MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

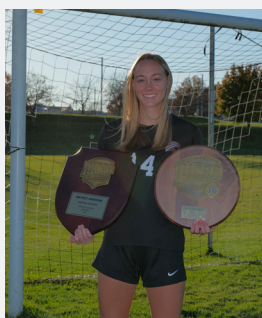
Women's Soccer

Congratulations to the Women's Soccer Team for making it again in 2024 to the "Elite 8" of the NJCAA Division II National Championship in Huntsville, Alabama. In the first round the Cougars (seeded #12 out of 12) pulled off an upset of the #8 seeded Scottsdale Community College (2-1). In the second round they took the #1-ranked team Northwest Mississippi to double overtime, but lost in the last minutes of the match 1-0.



In addition to this second run at the national title, the team is the back-to-back 2023 and 2024 Region 16 Conference Champions and the NJCAA Central District Champions. They finished their season with 16 wins, 2 losses, and 2 ties.

Giulia Starman and **Sandra Swartz** were named to 1st Team All Region and **Gabby Starman** was named to 2nd Team All Region.



Men's Cross Country

At the 2024 NJCAA Division III Cross-Country Championship in Richmond, Virginia, SCC's men's team pulled off a 12th place finish. The team of six qualified for the national tournament on Nov. 9 after finishing in second place in the regional meet.



SCC's top finisher was freshman **Logan Blasé**, who came in 19th with a time of 27:55.1.

Participants and results (8k)

19: **Logan Blasé**, 30:24.2

56: **Sam Flori**, 30:24.2

77: **Alex Jones**, 31:31.4

82: **James Warner**, 31:39.9

93: **Henry Krussell**, 32:37.5

121: **Sergio Darabcseh**, 36:04.2



HALLOWEEN AT SCC INCLUDED TECH BUILDING OPEN HOUSE AND HAUNTED ADVISING



SCC's School of Business, Technology, and Workforce Readiness hosted its "Haunted Open House," in the Technology Building, Wednesday, October 30, including Halloween-themed activities, candy, and decorations. Faculty and staff showed off the recently remodeled spaces and provided information on programs.



SCC Advising opened Spring and Summer registration with their "Haunted Advising" event, including decorations, popcorn, and prize drawings. These new events provided a fun and engaging experience, while also encouraging students to get registered early for Spring.

NEW 'EMPLOYEE CULINARY COLLECTIVE' SHOWCASES STUDENT TALENT

With extraordinary creations, our SCC Culinary students hosted the new "Employee Culinary Collective" events. Designed to engage employees, the events also offer culinary students the opportunity to experience serving clients. All current SCC employees are eligible to reserve one seat (first come, first served) at the Culinary Collective.

The first event was on October 31, and included a creative menu of "Monster Goo Bisque," "Roast Loin of Mummy En Croute," "Pumpkin Cheesecake," and more. The second event included heavy hors d'oeuvres and mocktails, at the Field to Table Institute. The menu included a "Carving Station with Herb Roasted Pork Loin," "Savory Bites," "Freight Farm Salad Station," and an assortment of desserts.



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EMPLOYEE AWARDS BANQUET PHOTOS

